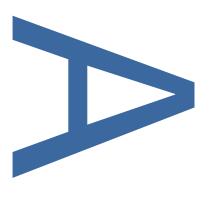
ACTON GARDENS,
PHASE 9.2,
SOUTH ACTON ESTATE,
ACTON,
LONDON BOROUGH OF EALING



AN ARCHAEOLOGICAL EVALUATION



SITE CODE: ATG19



JULY 2019

PRE-CONSTRUCT ARCHAEOLOGY

DOCUMENT VERIFICATION

Acton Gardens, Phase 9.2, South Acton Estate, Acton, London Borough of Ealing

Type of project

AN ARCHAEOLOGICAL EVALUATION

Quality Control

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ACTON GARDENS, PHASE 9.2, SOUTH ACTON ESTATE, ACTON, LONDON BOROUGH OF EALING: AN ARCHAEOLOGICAL EVALUATION

Site Code: ATG19

Central NGR: TQ 19694 79554

Local Planning Authority: LONDON BOROUGH OF EALING

Planning Reference: 182579OUT

Commissioning Client: COUNTRYSIDE PROPERTIES

Written/Researched by: ELLEN GREEN

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1 ABSTRACT

- 1.1 This report details the results of an archaeological evaluation undertaken by Pre-Construct Archaeology Ltd for Countryside Properties at Acton Gardens, Phase 9.2, South Acton Estate, Acton in the London Borough of Ealing.
- 1.2 The archaeological investigation was carried out between 27th of June to the 2nd of July 2019 and consisted of excavation of six trenches.
- 1.3 Natural deposits were observed in all trenches, sloping down towards the south of the site.
- 1.4 No evidence of anthropomorphic activity predating the 20th century was observed during the course of the investigation.

2 INTRODUCTION

- An archaeological evaluation was conducted by Pre-Construct Archaeology Limited (PCA) at Acton Gardens, Phase 9.2, South Acton Estate, Acton in the London Borough of Ealing (Figure 1). The site is a part of a large redevelopment project aiming to regenerate the estate and is centred at National Grid Reference TQ 19694 79554.
- 2.2 The archaeological investigation was undertaken in accordance with an approved Written Scheme of Investigation prepared by PCA (2019) and approved by Historic England Greater London Archaeology Advisory Service (GLAAS), archaeological advisors to LB Ealing.
- 2.3 The site lies within the Mill Hill Estate, Avenue Gardens and Heathfield Road Archaeology Priority Area as defined by LB Ealing.
- 2.4 The South Acton Estate lies in the south-east of the borough of Ealing and comprises approximately 2000 dwellings over 25 hectares built between 1950 and 1979 in medium to high rise blocks between three and sixteen storeys. The site comprises rectangular plot of land bounded by Enfield Road to the north, and Osbourne Road to the south and by residential buildings to the west (Figure 2). It also incorporates Hanbury Road to the east.
- 2.5 The work was undertaken by between 27th June and 2nd July 2019. The site was supervised by Ellen Green of PCA. The site was project managed by Zbigniew Pozorski also of Pre-Construct Ltd. The archaeological works were monitored by Sandy Kidd of Historic England's Greater London Archaeological Advisory Service (GLAAS), on behalf of the London Borough of Ealing. The project was commissioned by Countryside Properties.
- 2.6 The site was allocated the unique site code ATG19 by Museum of London.

3 PLANNING BACKGROUND

- 3.1 The site is located within the Mill Hill Estate, Avenue Gardens and Heathfield Road Archaeology Priority Area (APA A5; DLO35866) as defined by the London Borough of Ealing. The site has potential for archaeological remains dating broadly from prehistoric to post-medieval periods.
- 3.2 Planning permission was granted for the redevelopment of the whole South Acton Estate (LB Ealing Planning Ref. 182579OUT). A condition for archaeological investigation was imposed upon the consented scheme:

No development shall commence on any Phase or Development Zone (as relevant) until the applicant has secured the implementation of a programme of archaeological mitigation in accordance with a Written Scheme of Investigation for that phase / development zone, which shall be submitted and approved by the local planning authority.

No development or demolition shall take place other than in accordance with the approved Written Scheme of Investigation. The development shall not be occupied until the site investigation and post investigation assessment has been completed in accordance with the programme set out in the Written Scheme of Investigation, and the provision for analysis, publication and dissemination of the results and archive deposition has been secured.

Reason: Heritage assets of archaeological interest may survive on the site. The planning authority wishes to secure the provision of archaeological investigation and the subsequent recording of the remains prior to development, in accordance with Section 12 (Conserving and enhancing the historic environment) of the National Planning Policy Framework; policy 7.8 of the London Plan 2011; policy 1.1(h) of Ealing's adopted Development (or Core) Strategy 2012; and policy 4.9 of the adopted Ealing Unitary Development Plan 'Plan for the Environment' (2004).

- 3.3 PCA carried out archaeological investigation during earlier phases of the project: Phase 5 in 2015 and Phase 6.1 in 2017. The archaeological desk-based assessment was also prepared for Phase 9.1 in 2017.
- 3.4 Consultation with Sandy Kidd of Historic England Greater London Archaeological Advisory Service (GLAAS), archaeological advisor to LB Ealing, confirmed that the archaeological evaluation in form of trial trenches would also be required for the current phase of the works within the estate. This report details the findings of this investigation.

4 GEOLOGY AND TOPOGRAPHY

4.1 Geology

- 4.1.1 The bedrock geology of the area is comprised of London Clay Formation clay and silt formed approximately 34 to 56 million years ago in the Palaeogene Period when the local environment was previously dominated by deep seas (British Geological Survey).
- 4.1.2 The superficial geology within the development boundary is comprised of Head clay, silt, sand and gravel formed up to three million years ago in the Quaternary Period when the local environment was dominated by subaerial slopes (British Geological Survey).
- 4.1.3 Although, no borehole data is available for the Phase 9.2 development site, a borehole is noted on the British Geological Survey *c*. 200m to the west (BGS ID 580612). The record states that there was approximately 0.6m of made ground before encountering a brown clay.
- 4.1.4 Recent archaeological evaluations in the area undertaken prior to Phase 6.1 of Acton Gardens c. 440m to the south-east (PCA 2016) noted that geological deposits were observed from a height of 15.86m OD in the north within Trench 1 to 13.77m OD in the south within Trench 4. Thickness of made ground deposits also varied at the Phase 6.1 site with 1.07m being recorded in Trench 1; 0.53m in Trench 2; 0.87m within Trench 3 and 0.65m of made ground in Trench 4.

4.2 Topography

- 4.2.1 The South Acton Estate lies in the south-east of the borough of Ealing and comprises approximately 2000 dwellings over 25 hectares built between 1950 and 1979 in medium to high rise blocks between three and sixteen storeys.
- 4.2.2 The study site gently slopes north to south and lies between approximately 15m OD. There are no active watercourses in the vicinity of the subject site. The River Thames flows *c*. 1.8km to the south.
- 4.2.3 The site comprises rectangular plot of land bounded by Enfield Road to the north, and Osbourne Road to the south and by residential buildings to the west (Figure 2). It also incorporates Hanbury Road to the east.

5 ARCHAEOLOGICAL AND HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

5.1 Introduction

5.1.1 The archaeological and historical background in this section has been summarised form the Archaeological Desk Based Assessment prepared by Pre-Construct Archaeology (2017).

5.2 Prehistoric (450,000 BCE- 43 AD)

- 5.2.1 The site lies within the Thames Basin, above an area of fertile land which offered a host of natural resources to prehistoric populations. Numerous brooks and springs providing clean water would have been located within the prehistoric landscape. A large number of Palaeolithic flint tools have previously been found within the vicinity of the site, as well as a range of Mesolithic and Neolithic worked flint, including some found within the proposed South Acton development site.
- 5.2.2 A series of Bronze age cremations and cinerary urns were also uncovered in the vicinity of the site, both to the north-east and to the south, indicating the site may lie within a funerary landscape during this period.
- 5.2.3 Evidence of Iron Age activity in the vicinity of the site is limited to a single coin found c. 50m to the south-east and some residual pottery sherds within a Roman ditch to 257m to the northeast.

5.3 Roman (43 AD – 410 AD)

- 5.3.1 The major Roman road between London (*Londinium*) and Silchester (*Calleva Atrebatum*) passes through the Acton area and it is possible that farmsteads/villas would have existed within the surrounding landscape. The lower lying ground of Ealing rather than the high relief of Acton Hill may reflect the location of settlements in the Roman period.
- 5.3.2 Roman activity in the vicinity of the site is characterised primarily by series of ditches and pits, indicating the area was likely primarily agricultural.

5.4 Early Medieval (411 AD- 1065 AD)

5.4.1 The name Acton is early medieval in origin, with the name being a corruption of the Old English actun, meaning farmstead/village by the oak tree(s) or farm where oak timber is worked. The Acton area formed part of the manor of Fulham and in AD 704, Waldhere, the Bishop of London, bought the estate from the King of Mercia and Essex. Evidence of Early Medieval activity in the vicinity of the site is limited to a single pit found during excavations c. 400m to the north-east.

5.5 Medieval (1066 AD -1540 AD)

5.5.1 The Actor area is mentioned in the Domesday Book (1086) as part of the Bishop's Manor of Fulham, whilst the first specific reference to Actor dates to 1181. The medieval settlement at

Acton was divided into two hamlets (east and west), which remained as small, rural settlements throughout the medieval period. Berrymead Priory was located c. 900m to the north-east of the site, however no archaeological evidence dating from this period has been recovered within the vicinity of the site.

5.6 Post Medieval (1540 AD-1899 AD)

- 5.6.1 South Acton developed in the 16th and 17th centuries as a summer retreat for London residents. There is some evidence of early industry in the vicinity of the site including a windmill and gravel quarrying pits. Until the 1860's the area of the site was predominantly dominated by fields and orchards, however greater demand for lower cost housing drove rapid development beginning in Enfield Road, Hanbury Road, Osborne Road and Bollo Bridge Road. In the 1880s the nature of the housing built in the area changed due to the easy availability or transport. The houses were now primarily for commuters rather than local workers and included maisonettes and flats.
- 5.6.2 The dominant industry in the area was the laundries, with so many concentrated in South Acton it became known as 'Soapsuds Island'. Another longstanding local industry was the extraction of brickearth and brick works.

6 METHODOLOGY

- 6.1 The Written Scheme of Investigation for the project (PCA 2019) defined the aims of the archaeological evaluation as:
 - To clarity the nature and extent of existing disturbance and intrusions and hence assess the degree of archaeological survival;
 - To determine the natural topography and geology of the site, and the height at which it survives;
 - To establish the presence or absence of prehistoric activity, in particular of the Palaeolithic
 Bronze Age eras;
 - To establish the presence or absence of Roman activity;
 - To establish the presence or absence of medieval activity;
 - To establish the presence or absence of post-medieval activity at the site;
 - To establish the presence or absence of 19th and 20th century domestic and industrial activity at the site;
 - To establish the nature, date and survival of activity relating to any archaeological periods at the site;
 - To establish the extent of all past post-depositional impacts on the archaeological resource.
- 6.2 The evaluation was designed to comprise of 8 trenches measuring 20m x 1.8m in order to investigate a 4.5% sample of the site. However, due to space constraints on the site, only 6 trenches were excavated (Figure 2). These trenches had the following dimensions:

Trench	Orientation	Length (m)	Width at top (m)	Depth (m)	Upper height at top (m OD)
1	E-W	23.15	2.20	1.07	14.51
2	N-S	12.70	2.12	0.95	15.37
3	E-W	21.50	2.20	1.35	16.01
4	N-S	25.60	2.13	1.28	16.95
5	E-W	22.00	2.20	1.69	17.01
6	E-W	15.50	2.10	1.07	17.48

- 6.3 The constrains indicated above consisted of standing buildings in the north-western and southeastern corners of the site, area in the southern part of the site recently flooded and remediated and the area contaminated by asbestos in the western part of the site. The evaluation was also carried out during the ongoing demolition works on the site.
- 6.4 The trenches were excavated with a 30 ton 360 type mechanical excavator under archaeological supervision until either significant archaeological strata or natural deposits were exposed. The trenches were designed to be maximum 1.20m deep; where archaeological strata or natural ground were not encountered within this depth, a sondage was machine excavated.
- 6.5 The recording system adopted during the investigations were fully compatible with those widely used elsewhere in London, that is those developed out of the Department of Urban Archaeology Site Manual, now published by the Museum of London (MoLAS 1994), and with the PCA Site Manual (Taylor and Brown 2009).
- Where safe to do so, all deposits were cleaned and excavated by hand. All deposits were recorded on proforma context sheets. Sections were drawn at 1:10 and all trenches and features were recorded using a Leica GPS system. All levels were taken using temporary benchmarks set out with a Leica GPS system. A digital photographic record was also kept throughout the archaeological investigation.
- 6.7 The completed archive produced during the evaluation, comprising written, drawn, photographic records and artefacts will be deposited with LAARC, identified by site code ATG19.
- 6.8 All works were undertaken in accordance with following relevant documents:
 - Acton Gardens, Phase 9.2, South Acton Estate, Acton, London Borough of Ealing: Written Scheme of Investigation for Archaeological Evaluation (Pre-Construct Archaeology Limited 2019)
 - Management of Research Projects in the Historic Environment (MoRPHE; Historic England 2015)
 - Guidelines for Archaeological Projects in Greater London (Historic England Greater London Archaeology Advisory Service GLAAS 2015);
 - Standard and guidance for an archaeological evaluation' (Chartered Institute for Archaeologists CIfA 2014).
 - Fieldwork Induction Manual: Operations Manual 1 (Taylor, J. with Brown, G., 2009, updated 2018, Pre-Construct Archaeology Limited)

7 THE ARCHAEOLOGICAL SEQUENCE

7.1 Phase 1: Natural

- 7.1.1 The earliest deposit recorded in all six trenches was a firm compact mid orangey brown naturally deposited clay, described as the British Geological Survey (BGS) as part of the Head deposits over London Clay.
- 7.1.2 These natural deposits are tabulated below:

Trench	Context no.	Maximum height (m OD)
1	2	14.27
2	6	14.60
3	9	14.90
4	7	15.97
5	10	16.95
6	12	16.57

7.1.3 The maximum heights of the natural clay indicated a gradual rise in the ground from Trench 1 in the south to Trench 6 in the north.

7.2 Phase 1.1: Natural Feature

- 7.2.1 Cutting the subsoil deposit [11] in Trench 6 was an irregular shaped cut [14] that was 1.50m in length, 1.20m wide and 0.25m deep. It was recorded at a height of 16.61m OD.
- 7.2.2 With a fill [13] that was described as loose mid greyish brown silty sand with frequent subangular stones and lensed of fine sand.
- 7.2.3 No cultural material was recovered from the fill and the cut was irregular in shape with no obvious signs of human activity, it has been interpreted as a natural feature such as a tree bowl.

7.3 Phase 1.2: Subsoils

- 7.3.1 Overlaying the natural deposits in Trench 1, Trench 2, Trench 4 and Trench 6 were layers of sub-soil.
- 7.3.2 These subsoil deposits are tabulated below:

Trench	Context no.	Maximum height (m OD)
1	1	14.53
2	5	14.35
3	N/A	N/A
4	8	14.90
5	N/A	N/A
6	11	17.07

7.4 Phase 2: Late-Post Medieval / Modern

- 7.4.1 Truncating the subsoil in Trench 2 was a large pit [4] with a brick rubble fill [3]. The bricks from the fill were spot dated to the late 19th/early 20th century.
- 7.4.2 Modern deposits sealed all of the trenches excavated and formed the current ground level of between 14.41m OD in the south of site to 17.48m OD in the north.
- 7.4.3 Modern services and associated manholes were observed in Trench 4 alone with the foundations of the 1950s flat block. A similarly modern manhole was observed within Trench 2.
- 7.4.4 Large modern truncations were observed in Trench 1, Trench 3 and Trench 5. A sondage through the truncation in Trench 5 showed the truncation to be 1.9m deep, and those in Trenches 1 and 3 were not bottomed. The truncation in Trench 1 was associated with the repair works required for the broken water main on site, while the truncations present in Trenches 3 and 5 were likely associated with demolition works of the buildings previously on site.

8 INTERPRETATIONS AND CONCLUSIONS

- 8.1 The results of this evaluation have enabled the research aims that were set out in the Written Scheme of Investigation to be addressed:
 - To clarity the nature and extent of existing disturbance and intrusions and hence assess the degree of archaeological survival.
- 8.2 A large number of modern disturbances were present in the southern and western portions of site, as shown by the large truncations in Trenches 1, 3 and 5. In addition modern features such as services, building foundations and manholes were present in Trenches 2 and 4. Only Trench 6 in the northernmost portion of site did not have any modern disturbance.
 - To determine the natural topography and geology of the site, and the height at which it survives.
- 8.3 The natural geology of the site was primarily comprised of a mid-reddish brown silty clay, however patches of sand and gravel were observed in Trenches 3,5 and 6. This is consistent with the Head deposits which overlay the London Clay formation in this area of London. The topography of the natural slopes down to the south, from 16.95m OD to 14.27m OD in the south.
 - To establish the presence or absence of prehistoric activity, in particular of the Palaeolithic-Bronze Age eras.
- 8.4 No archaeological activity dating to the Bronze Age was observed in the evaluation trenches.

 To establish the presence or absence of Roman activity.
- 8.5 No archaeological activity dating to the Roman period was observed in the evaluation trenches

 To establish the presence or absence of medieval activity.
- 8.6 No archaeological activity dating to the medieval period was observed in the evaluation trenches.
 - To establish the presence or absence of post-medieval activity at the site
- 8.7 A single pit containing demolition rubble was encountered in Trench 2 extending beyond the limit of excavation to the east. The bricks were dated to 1875-1925 and were likely part of whatever dwellings occupied the site before the building of the Estate in the 1950s.
 - To establish the presence or absence of 19th and 20th century domestic and industrial activity at the site.
- 8.8 It is possible that the pit observed in Trench 2 represents the removal of earlier built features prior the construction of the 1950s housing estate.
- 8.9 The concrete footings and a portion of the brick wall associated with the 1950s housing estate were observed in Trench 4.

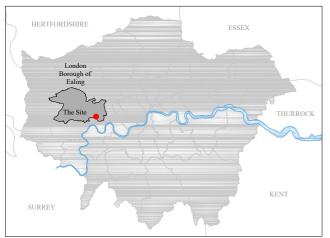
- 8.10 No evidence of industrial activity was encountered on site.
 - To establish the nature, date and survival of activity relating to any archaeological periods at the site.
- 8.11 The only archaeological activity observed was the late 19th/ early 20th century pit located in Trench 2. Very few conclusions can be drawn from the small portion of the pit that was visible within the trench other than the date of the backfill.
 - To establish the extent of all past post-depositional impacts on the archaeological resource.
- 8.12 A large amount of truncation was present in the southern and western portions of the site likely associated with both the burst water main and the demolition of the standing buildings on the site. The area of Trench 4 had already been stripped down to natural prior archaeological investigation and around 75% of the areas comprised by Trenches 1, 3 and 5 were completely truncated by modern works.

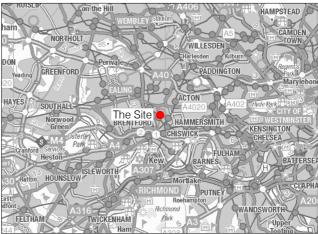
9 ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

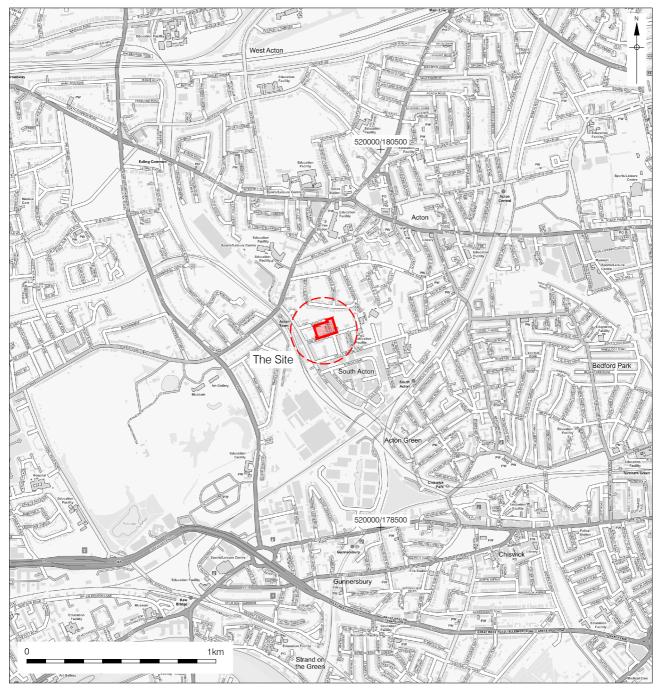
- 9.1 Pre-Construct Archaeology Ltd would like to thank Helen Finlay of Countryside Properties for commissioning the archaeological work and Andrew Owusu, also of Countryside Properties, for his assistance and all the help.
- 9.2 We also thank Sandy Kidd, the Historic England Greater London Archaeology Advisory Service (GLAAS), Archaeology Advisor for the London Borough of Ealing for monitoring the site.
- 9.3 Thanks also to the team from Wooldridge Demolition for their help facilitating the excavations and to Richard Krason, Elena Stefani and Kurt Russell for their work on site.
- 9.4 The author would like to thank Zbigniew Pozorski for project managing the site and for editing this report, Ray Murphy for CAD illustrations, and John Joyce for logistics.

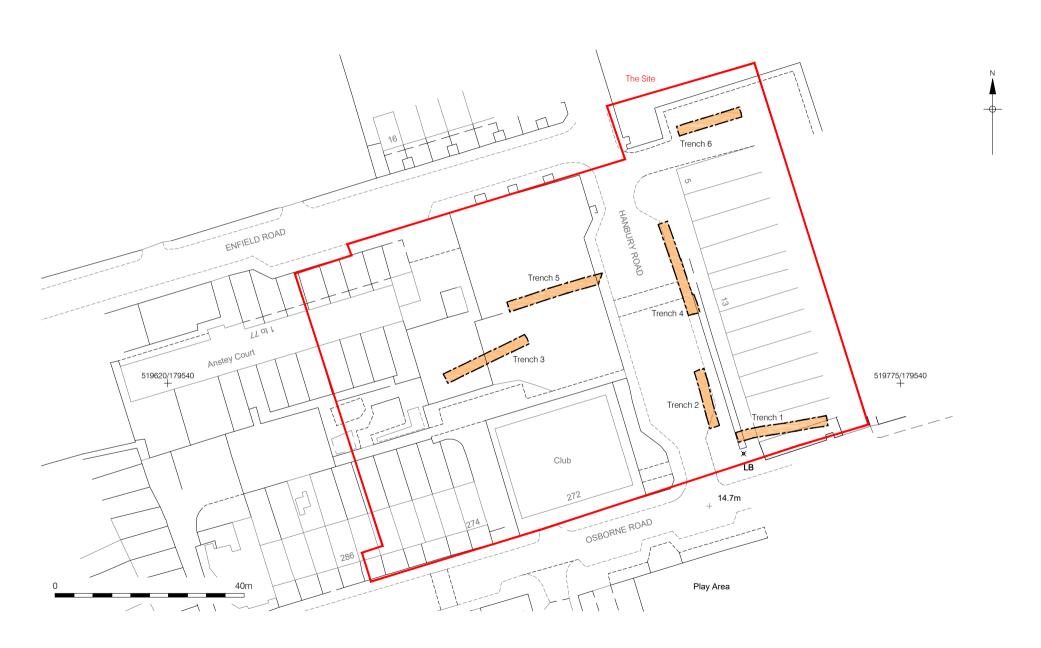
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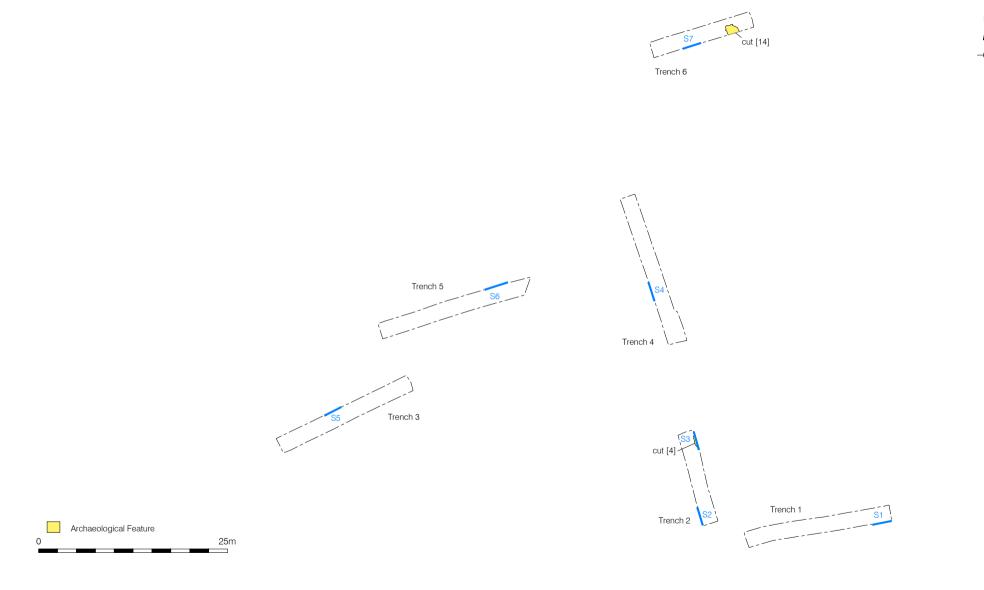
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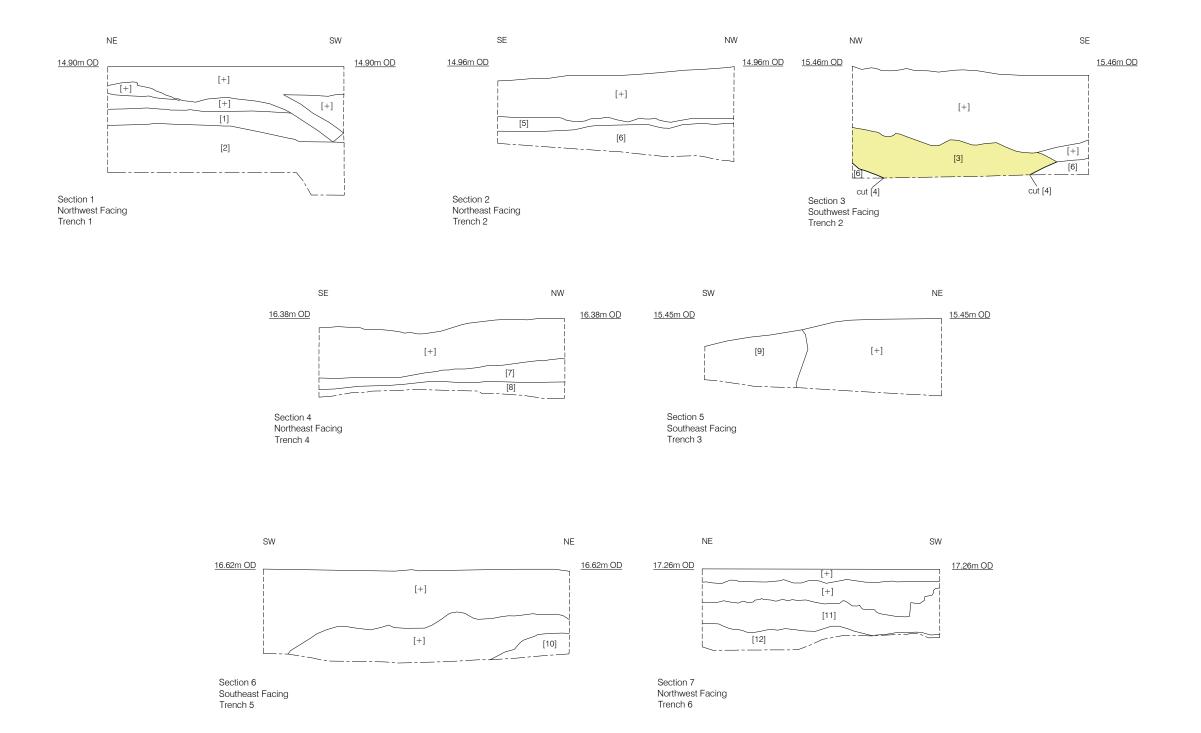












Archaeological Feature

PLATES



Plate 1: East facing view of Trench 1 (1m scale).



Plate 2: North facing view of Trench 2 (1m scale).



Plate 3: North-east facing view of Trench 3 (1m scale).



Plate 4: South view of Trench 4 (1m scale).



Plate 5: North-west view of Trench 5 (1m scale).



Plate 6: North-west view of Trench 6 (1m scale).



Plate 7: Trench 1 North Facing Section (1m scale).



Plate 8: Trench 2 East Facing Section (1m Scale).



Plate 9: Trench 4 South Facing Section (1m scale).



Plate 10: Trench 6 North Facing Section (no scale).



Plate 11: Trench 6 Shot facing south of Natural Feature [14] and Fill [13], (1m scale).

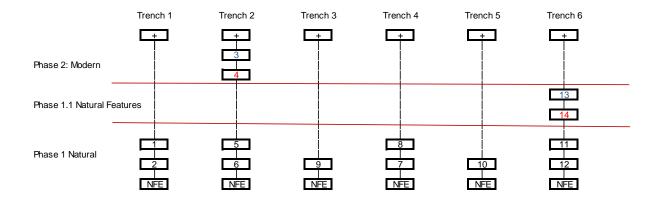


Plate 12: Trench 2 looking East showing pit [4] with brick rubble fill [3], (1m scale).

APPENDIX 1: CONTEXT INDEX

Context	Trench	Interpretation	Length	Width	Levels high	Levels low
1	1	Sub soil			14.53	
2	1	Natural			14.27	14.09
3	2	Demolition rubble fill of [4]	2.25	0.7	14.9	
4	2	Cut of pit	2.15	0.7	14.9	14.37
5	2	sub soil			14.35	
6	2	Natural			14.6	14.22
7	4	Natural			15.97	15.77
8	4	Subsoil			16.21	
9	3	Natural			15.27	
10	5	Natural			16.95	14.8
11	6	Subsoil			17.07	16.61
12	6	Natural			16.69	16.57
13	6	Fill of tree-bowl	1.5	1.2	16.61	
14	6	Cut of tree-bowl	1.5	1.2	16.61	16.36

APPENDIX 2: STRATIGRAPHIC MATRIX



APPENDIX 3: CBM REPORT

By Amparo Valcarcel

Two samples bricks were collected from the fill of pit [4]. The bricks are made of two different fabrics: post-great fire fabric 3032, and Fletton 3038. Both examples are frogged. Fletton brick preserves a stamp: L.B.C. PHORPHES, indicating a late 19th or early 20th century date.

Context	Fabric	Form	Size	Date rar mate	•	Latest da	ted material		Spot date with mortar
		Post great fire and Fletton							No mortar
3	3032; 3038	bricks	2	1666	1950	1850	1950	1875-1925	

The building material assemblage reflects the late post-medieval/modern development of this site and none of the material is of intrinsic interest. No further work is recommended.

APPENDIX 4: OASIS FORM

OASIS ID: preconst1-358483

Project details

Project name Acton Gardens, Phase 9.2

Short description of the project

This report details the results of an archaeological evaluation undertaken by Pre-Construct Archaeology Ltd for Countryside Properties at Acton Gardens, South Acton Estate, Acton in the London Borough of Ealing. The archaeological investigation, carried out between 27th of June to the 2nd of July 2019, consisted of six trenches. Excavation and recording was conducted in accordance with the standards specified by the chartered Institute for Archaeologists and following guidelines issued by Historic England. Natural deposits were observed in all six trenches, sloping upwards towards the north of the site. No evidence of

sloping upwards towards the north of the site. No evidence o archaeological activity was observed in any of the trenches.

Project dates Start: 27-06-2019 End: 02-07-2019

Previous/future

work

Not known / Not known

Any associated project reference

codes

ATG19 - Sitecode

Type of project Field evaluation

Site status (other) Archaeological Priority Area

Current Land use Residential 1 - General Residential

Methods & techniques

"Sample Trenches"

Development type Housing estate

Prompt Planning condition

Position in the planning process

After full determination (eg. As a condition)

Project location

Country England

Site location GREATER LONDON EALING ACTON Acton Gardens Phase 9.2

Postcode W3 8RD

Site coordinates TQ 19694 79554 51.501737790513 -0.275328834379 51 30 06 N 000 16

31 W Point

Height OD / Depth Min: 14.27m Max: 16.95m

Project creators

Name of Organisation

Pre-Construct Archaeology Limited

Project brief originator

Zbigniew Pozorski

Project design originator

Zbigniew Pozorski

Project

director/manager

Zbigniew Pozorski

an coton/manager

Project supervisor Ellen Green

Type of

sponsor/funding

body

Countryside Properties

Project archives

Physical Archive

Exists?

No

Digital Archive

recipient

MLAA

Digital Media available

"Database","Images raster / digital photography","Survey"

Paper Archive recipient

MLAA

Paper Media

available

"Context sheet","Diary","Drawing","Matrices","Section"

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